

## **CITY OF MIDDLETOWN**

Parks & Recreation Department  
100 Riverview Center  
Suite 140  
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

### **Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes of October 4, 2012** **Held at the Recreation Department Office at 100 Riverview Center**

Present: Commissioners Gerry Winzer, Philip Pessina, Tony Jaskot, Sheila Jones, Rick Romano and Student Representative Druvi Patel. Director Raymond Santostefano and Superintendent John Milardo, representing the Parks and Recreation Department.

Absent: Commissioner Todd Berch and Student Representative Malcolm Alleyne

Call: Chairman Winzer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the main room of the Recreation office, 100 Riverview Center, Suite 140, Middletown.

Public Hearing: There were no members of the public present and Chairman Winzer closed the public hearing.

Minutes: Chairman Winzer requested a motion to approve the minutes from September 6, 2012. Commissioner Romano made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Jaskot.

Vote: The Parks & Recreation Commission minutes of September 6, 2012 were unanimously approved. Commissioner Pessina abstained.

Correspondence: Director Santostefano reported that there was no new correspondence

Miscellaneous: Director Santostefano reported on the need for an irrigation project at Hubbard Park which would cost approximately \$4,000. John Milardo explained that the concrete pad is sinking, and a pipe was broken. The valves for the sprinkler system were misplaced and they had to be dug up. A jackhammer was used and pipes needed to be cut. The existing enclosure would be used. Director Santostefano says that the Council wants our department to pay for this type of repair out of our operating budget and come to the Council in the Spring if we need additional money. We are spending our operating budget on all of the existing projects at this point.

Motion: Commissioner Pessina makes a Motion to ask for LoCIP money because this is an important field. The Motion is seconded by Commissioner Romano. All in favor.

Department Reports: Director Santostefano reports that all fields are online for soccer, football, baseball and lacrosse, except the three fields at Country Club Road. We had the soccer jamboree; there were washouts at Vet's Park a few times; Veteran's will be using Veteran's Park; we had the Ray Jacobs dedication and there has been no press coverage as of today even though a press release was written and given to the Middletown Press; Denis O'Brien donated the sign for the Ray Jacobs field behind Moody School; the Parks crew repaired irrigation pipes at Palmer Field, which was done in house with the Parks crew; Wesleyan and Middletown High Cross Country teams use Vet's Park; the tunnels were cleaned, the Press Box at Palmer was repaired; the backboard at Donovan Park was repaired, roof leaks at the Pavilion and the garage were repaired; we had a few big football games for Xavier that the Parks department worked; we are looking into emergency lighting for the Xavier vs. Hand game that should be heavily attended; and Union Park got new flagpole lights.

On the Recreation side the Fall/Winter brochure is out; all of the programs are running; a flyer will be going in the Water bill to remind people that the brochure is available; there will be pumpkin decorating on 10/14, Gotta's Farm donated 100 pumpkins; lacrosse and Goran Vasic soccer are popular; we will have downtown trick-or-treating; the Lady Catherine Cruise was well attended; we will have another cruise on May 13<sup>th</sup>; Inclusion Programs of games, basketball, movie night and MARC; and North End basketball starts in November.

Miscellaneous:

Chairman Winzer thanked Commissioner Jones who asked the Mayor to contact the Chairman. They spoke about the plans for Veterans Park and the Mayor explained what he would like to do. The Mayor said he would come to the Commission for suggestions and ideas. Chairman Winzer explained his idea for mini golf. Chairman Winzer also talked to the Mayor about the plan to move Parks into Public Works Department. The Mayor said that no decision on that was made yet. Chairman Winzer expressed his concerns to the Mayor indicating that the move would not be more efficient and it should stay with the Recreation Department. A Common Councilwoman is saying that it's a "done deal", which the Mayor said is not true. There needs to be a super majority which is 9 out of 12. This move will cost the city money in labor upgrades. Chairman Winzer is concerned about losing Palmer Field. Commissioner Pessina said that the Common Council will have a workshop before any decisions are made and the public can attend but cannot speak. Commissioner Pessina said that he isn't sold on the idea. He would like information from the department and Commission as to why it would or would not work. John Milardo stated that the Task Force should be telling the Council why the change should be done. At the meeting when the Task Force met with the department, the members didn't ask the Director any questions about the department. The only similarity between the Parks Division and the Public Works Department is that they both snow plow and use backhoes. All other functions of the two departments are different; the Public Works Department takes care of roads, curbs, catch basins, leaves, and plows while the Parks Division does landscaping, field preparation, electrical work, plumbing, masonry, horticultural and more. Chairman Winzer heard that the argument in favor of the consolidation is that another town similar in size to Middletown has fewer directors

Miscellaneous Continued:

reporting to the Mayor and that is beneficial. This change wouldn't lower the number of directors that report to the Mayor. Director Santostefano reported that the National and State organizations are called the CT Recreation and Parks Association and the National Recreation and Parks Association. In addition, it will change the makeup of seniority in the combined department because the Parks employees have more seniority and will be eligible for more overtime than the Public Works employees that they are currently getting now.

Chairman Winzer discussed the replacement of the Christmas Tree on the South Green. The tree is currently split in the middle and held together with cables. He suggested that we find someone to donate a mature tree because we will need to replace the currently one in the future.

Old Business: **Renovation of Palmer Field Concession Stand**

John Milardo reported on the progress of the new concession stand at Palmer Field which will be a trailer design. He is getting a quote from Michael Shantz and described what the subcommittee is looking for. There are no local vendors that can provide the type of concession stand that the subcommittee would like to purchase.

New Business:

**Review and set the Recreation Activity Fees, Sec. 214-40.**

Director Santostefano spoke about the need to review and set the Activity Fees. This will go before the Common Council in December, 2012. He reported that in past years the Commission decided to leave the fees the same because of the economy. Director Santostefano and Ray Jacobs spoke last year about adjusting fees and decided to wait until this year. In speaking with Debbie Stanley the Superintendent of Recreation, Director Santostefano would like to propose increasing the fee for the Tot Time program which is lower than the other camps at \$42 while other camps are charged \$59. In addition, both camps will pay an \$11 activity fee. Tot Time has the same hours as the other camps; it has a higher ratio of campers and counselors due to the young age of the campers. In addition Director Santostefano is recommending that swim lessons for out-of-town participants not get a sibling discount as they do now. Swim lessons for out-of-town participants are \$80 for the first child, \$40 for the second child and \$20 for the third child and any additional children. Director Santostefano is proposing that all out-of-town children pay \$80. This is a reasonable rate. Commissioner Pessina would like the director to email him and Commissioner Berch so that the fees are properly changed at the Common Council meeting. Director Santostefano indicated that the resolution he prepares will clearly state the change and there should be no confusion. He would estimate the positive financial impact based on this year's participation.

Motion:

Commissioner Romano made a motion to approve the increase in fees as follows:

Section 214-40A(9) Tot Time increase fees to \$59 plus \$11 for activity fee; and  
Section 214-40B(D)7(1)(2)(3), there will be no sibling discount and each out of town child shall pay \$80 for swim lessons.

Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. All in favor.

New Business – Continued:

**Proposed Boy Scout Project at Pat Kidney Field**

Chairman Winzer brought up the proposal for an Eagle Scout project at Pat Kidney Field. The Commissioners did not have the name of the Boy Scout but indicated he lived on Hotchkiss Street in Middletown. John Milardo stated that it was at the Hard Ball Field going to the Football Field at Woodrow Wilson/Pat Kidney. Mr. Milardo and John Parker looked over the plans and decided the field did not need handicapped access and the Boy Scout's plan would work with timber steps. John Parker gave the OK for the project. John Milardo offered the Parks Division's assistance with the project. The project will be completed in time for Spring use of the fields.

Motion: Motion by Commissioner Pessina to approve the project, second by Commissioner Jones. All in favor.

Commissioner Pessina asked for information on the tennis courts on Hunting Hill Avenue. There was discussion about repairing these courts and the track at the last Common Council meeting. The Board of Education would like to bond for these repairs. Commissioner Jones suggested that it would be better to put new tennis courts near Middletown High School for their tennis team to use. The Commission agreed this would be a better idea.

Motion Motion to Adjourn by Commissioner Pessina, seconded by Commissioner Romano, all in favor, passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Christine Bourne

cc: Mayor Daniel Drew